

THREEPENCE



EVERY FRIDAY

EAGLE

26 MAY 1950 No. 7

DAN DARE

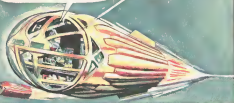
PILOT OF THE FUTURE



STREAKING THROUGH SPACE, DAN'S TINY ROCKET SHIPS SET OUT ON THE LAST LAP OF THE PERILOUS JOURNEY TO VENUS—THE MYSTERY PLANET

VERY WELL, MISS PEABODY! YOU WILL PILOT THE SHIP BUT ONCE WE REACH VENUS YOU WILL PLEASE CONSIDER YOURSELF UNDER ARREST FOR INSUBORDINATION

IF WE REACH VENUS, SIR HUBERT



WE SHOULD BE NEAR THE PRIMER AGON NOW, SIR

HELLO SIRS 2 AND 3 CUT YOUR ENGINES YOU TOO, MISS PEABODY!

RIGHT, SIR

IF THIS RAY FIELD THEORY OF HUBERT IS RIGHT, DAN, WE SHOULD ALMOST BE IN THE RAYFIELD NOW.....

WILL YOU HAVE THE FIRST SHOT AT GETTING THROUGH? I CAN'T ALLOW PROFESSOR PEABODY TO TAKE THAT RISK

VERY GOOD, SIR



ALL SET, DIG? HERE WE GO THEN.
CROSS ALL YOUR FINGERS AND
HANG ON TO YOUR HAT!



YOU MUST HAVE BEEN RIGHT
ABOUT THE RAYS ONLY ATTACKING
IMPULSE MOTORS, SIR—USING
ROCKETS MUST BE THE ANSWER

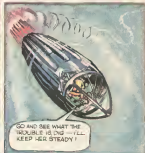
I THINK WE
MAY MAKE
IT DIG.



BUT MEANWHILE
THE RADIO...



WHAT.....



GO AND SEE WHAT THE
TROUBLE IS, DIG—I'LL
KEEP HER STEADY!



THE RADIO RECEIVER'S
BLOWN UP, SIR

OF COURSE!—WHAT IDIOTS WE
ALL ARE! THE RADIOS WORKED
BY IMPULSE WAVES



IT CAUGHT FIRE, SIR, BUT
I GOT THAT OUT WITH
AN EXTINGUISHER—
TROUBLE IS THE
PLATES ARE BADLY
STRAINED ON THE
STARBOARD SIDE



DON'T
THINK THEY'LL
HOLD FOR MUCH
LONGER—AND
ONCE THEY GIVE
WAY.

I KNOW, DIG—ONCE
THE INSIDE SHUN GOES
WELL, JUST AS TWO
MORE BITS OF SPACE
DUST—WELL, IT WAS
A NICE TRY.....



PITY WE CAN'T RADIO
THE OTHERS, AND TELL
THEM—THEY'D
GET THROUGH THE
RAYFIELD EASILY
IF THEY KNEW

SCREAM



WELL—WE CAN
BALE OUT—IF THE
KITELL HOLD
TOGETHER, WHILE
WE SLOW DOWN

LOOK, SIR!
THE ATMOSPHERE
LIGHTS ON!
—WE'VE HIT THE AIR
ROUND VENUS!

CONTINUED

The Adventures of P.C.49

FROM THE FAMOUS RADIO
series by ALAN STRANKS



CONTINUED

"He had teeth just the expression men of animal nature than of a human smile." "I shall do what you tell me, of course," she said, without emotion. "I have no choice."

"Exactly. Now we have managed to find out a good deal about the Conspirators, but we could not ask too obviously about the location of their headquarters without arousing the young man's suspicions. It seemed to assume that his 'friend' knew all about the 'Vanity,' and about the movie he called 'C' for reaching it. You're sure he said 'Vanity'?" This question was shot at Gaster, who started to attention. "In his message, as you read it to me, the 'V' was missing."

"He must've missed it by accident," grumbled Gaster. "There isn't so much word as 'vanity.'"

"Well, that's one of the things Anna must find out," said Spunge-Bag. "To make him trust you, Anna, you must be kind to him, and he must see one of us being unkind to you." Gaster's eyes flickered, and he looked at his lips nervously. "If you tell him part of the talk about your father, and add a few 'insert' remarks, they should do the trick. Begin by 'sneaking' him some food."

"The fun turned to the door." "You think you can manage to wheedle out of him the location of their HQ?" asked Spunge-Bag slyly.

"I'll do my best." "You'd better!" he snarled. She backed away from his sudden glare, and Gaster closed the door after her.

KEN was finishing his second breakfast that day, whilst the Vicar was upstairs shaving and dressing, when the door-bell clanged. It happened that he wasn't at his own house. Ken rushed to the door, just hearing his host to it. When he saw the slight, bespectacled figure on the door-step, he knew a momentary disappointment, quickly changed to surprise when the Vicar hailed the new arrival as "Geoff." The chap wasn't Ken's idea of a Secret Service man! Why, the curly person looked the part better, except for his collar!

"You don't look a bit like my idea of a Secret Agent!" blurted Ken. Then he wished

complementary. He was quickly reassured. "Splendid!" exclaimed the man called Geoff. "That's the last thing we want to look like. Now, tell me everything you know about this business."

He made himself comfortable in one of the shabby chairs. His host offered him a cigarette, but he shook his head and took out a silver snuff-box. He helped himself delicately to snuff, and once again Ken wondered at the decided air of this hunter of desperate sins. Then, resting the frothy blue cap that never left his face and seemed to bent right into him, he remembered the "Scarlet Pimpernel," and was glad he was on the same side as Geoff. Or was he? He was on Ray's side, no matter what might happen, and hoped that was the sure thing.

Ken recalled everything he knew, with occasional interjections from the Vicar and shrewd questions from Geoff. He hadn't meant to say anything about Ray, but found himself pouring out the whole story as if he were hypnotized. When he had finished, Geoff cocked an inquiring eyebrow at his host, and reached for the phone.

He made several calls, both trunk and local, speaking rapidly in the tones of one accustomed to be obeyed without question. When he had finished, he said, "Now we'll go and have a look at that cellar."

They soon reached the bombed house from whose cellar the gangsters had operated, and Ken watched with awe as Geoff's slender fingers found the secret of the two pivoted flaps and revealed the hatch-hole. Empty.

For a long time the Secret Service man studied the hole by the light of the torch the Vicar held, but murmuring what had happened to Ray, he didn't put his hand in. At last he drew back, and studied once again the message left by Ray and the missing scarlet.

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He ran quickly down the spiral staircase.

me down as a sympathizer if you like."

The Reverend Bill's jaw was thrust out and Geoff returned at rock angles.

"At least we can work together in catching Gog," he said. "I probably know more than you about the Con—about the Peacemakers, and we've no proof that they are dishonest at the moment. It's not illegal to persuade people, even against, scoundrels, to leave the country voluntarily, but I'd like to know what they're up to wherever they take them."

The man from M.I.5 led the way back into

the street, where Ken was supposed to find Dr. Brugg's grey Jaguar, with Dick at the wheel, and Ann sitting beside him. Ken ran across to them.

"How's Pru?" asked Ann anxiously. "Oh, she's all right," returned Ken, with brightly casualness. "How is it if you aren't a deep, dark danger?"

Dick answered for him. "It's out of the hands of police, now. They've now more to do with it. Secret Service is in look over. You feller's in charge."

He introduced Geoff with his thumb. Before Ken could reply, the Vicar and his friend came up and the Secret Agent was introduced to Dick and Ann.

"Jolly decent of you to let us be in at the death!" thanked Ann.

"Whose death, I wonder?" murmured Geoff—but they were all going into the car and only Dick heard him.

"Are you satisfied to work with a team of associates?" asked the Nocturner. "Ah, none police as all appear it. Are you so push on the job?"

"I'm satisfied," smiled Geoff, ignoring the second question. "I should think you'd be a good man in a scrap, and I know 'Burglar Bill' is. These lads must confine themselves to scouting for us. You're under my orders, now."

"Yes!" chorused Dick and Ken, trying to look alert and dependable.

"Where d'you want to go?" asked Dick, letting in the chair.

"You solved it first, Bill—tell him!" and the man from M.I.5

"The desirable modern residence—5 mscp, 6 bath, 8, and c., and one, and all the usual ornaments, standing. I assure you, in its own grounds," said the big man, "of that eminent scientist and inventor, Professor Gog?"

Dick put his feet down, and the Jaguar swooped forward.

"Ah, but we'll find her's flows," he said gloomily.

(To be continued next week)

REAL LIFE MYSTERIES



THE MARY CELESTE

Captain Morehouse of the barque, *Der Grania*, 130 miles east of Portugal, sighted the two-masted 282-ton brig, *Mary Celeste*, in the afternoon of 24 December, 1872. Her master, Captain Benjamin Briggs, was his friend. The *Mary Celeste* had left New York for Genoa four days earlier than the *Der Grania*. As Captain Morehouse wanted to waste a greeting

to Briggs, he ordered the helmsman to steer close to the *Mary Celeste*. When the two masts drew abreast Captain Morehouse became alarmed. There was no one at the wheel of the *Mary Celeste*, no one on her deck. Captain Morehouse hailed her. There was no reply. He lowered a boat and rowed across. The brig's sails were set but the breeze was light. The ship was empty. Captain Briggs, his wife, their small child and the



crew of seven had all disappeared. Captain Briggs' cabin was tidy. The lid of a barrel-mat was open. In a stowage rack was a half-made garment. In the larder hung the crew's clothes. There were no signs of violence, and there was plenty of food and water. The last entry in the ship's log was dated eleven days earlier. After that the entire crew had disappeared. The ship's one small boat was missing. For ten days the ship had

sailed herself 250 miles on the right course. Captain Briggs was a fine seaman, he had left a fourteen-year-old son ashore at their New England home. Captain Morehouse took the *Mary Celeste* in charge. An official inquiry offered no explanation. Captain Briggs and his companions were never heard of again. The *Mary Celeste* was sold and was finally wrecked in 1885, having provided one of the greatest mysteries of the sea.

CRICKET COACHING BY LEARIE CONSTANTINE

THIS WEEK:

HOOK SHOT

**RIGHT FOOT
BACK AND
ACROSS**



**NOTE:
SHAPING TO
STRIKE TOP
OF BALL**



**ABOUT
TO MAKE
CONTACT
NOTE:
POSITION
OF BAT.**



**WRIST
TURNING
OVER
AT
CONTACT**

**NOTE:
POSITION
OF WRISTS
AFTER
CONTACT**



**BODY
TURNING
AWAY
TO CLEAR
FLIGHT OF
BALL (SELF
PRESERVATION)**

**MOVEMENT
COMPLETED**



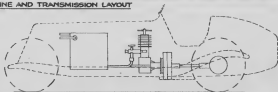
**NEXT WEEK
THROWING
IN - FOR
ACCURACY**

MAKING YOUR OWN MODEL RACING CAR

TANK INSTALLATION



ENGINE AND TRANSMISSION LAYOUT



CONSTRUCTING THE 1½ LITRE E.R.A. RACING CAR PART IV

by G.W. Arthur-Brand

SCALE EFFECT

To get best result, is precise accuracy for the model and the car of good quality and shape. The jig is made from wood with two holeless rails down at the appropriate distance apart. Two of these should be made up, one for the front and one for the rear suspension.

Put off the spring to the rear axle, for the front axle, then mark off lengths and cut out. The "universal" bar is now prepared to the jig. The ends project over the rails and glass. When the glue is dry, apply shellac, then half leaf sand in an anti each spring is completed. Apply shellac all over and hang to dry through.

The mounting pins for the springs are made from 1/16" brass, drilled, the front-wheel pins, forming the tie bars for the chassis and the rear (left, and each spring with coarse wound steel thread and front apply a coat of well thinned black dope.



SPRING JIG



REAR SUSPENSION

The central attachment of the spring is 5/16" the rear axle. The axle (1/16" may be made from copper wire, instead through hole drilled in the springs and 1/16" BA nuts. They can be up a hole in rubber.



FRONT SUSPENSION

Attachment of the spring in this case is 5/16" the front axle. The axle (1/16" may be made from copper wire, instead through hole drilled in the springs and 1/16" BA nuts. They can be up a hole in rubber.

SETH AND SHORTY - COWBOYS

SETH AND SHORTY
HAVE ESCAPED FROM
BLACK JAKE AND
HIS GANG

WELL WE
GOT AWAY!
GUESS BLACK JAKE
IS RUSSING HIS
EYES!

HEAR!!

WHAT MISCHIEF
HEV THOSE TWO
HANDS BEEN
UP TO?

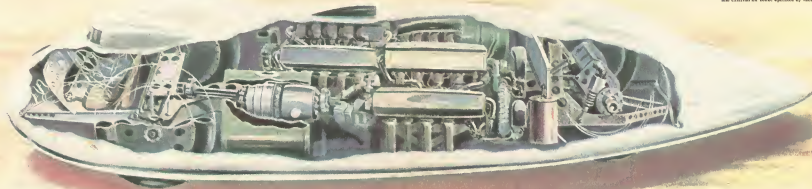


SAMEO! YOU
OLD SINNER IF
YOU DON'T SHIT US NOT
SUPPER THIS TRIP
WE'LL MAKE A
COWLAND OF YOU!

WELL NOT GORE?
WELL ALL DESSE
GANNITS YOU'D BE
WAKIN UP A SHIN
AND A SHAIN
FOR ICE

CONTINUED

JOHN COBB'S WORLD RECORD BREAKING CAR



The 'Mild' Special, holder of the World's Land based Record of 394.187 mph., Donville Park, Utah, U.S.A. The car ran the average mile 48.112 mph. The power unit is two Packard 'V-8's' engines, the rear engine driving the forward wheels and the forward engine driving the rear wheels, making a total of 2,000 hp. The speeds available with the 3 speed gear box are 150, 250 and 400 mph. plus. Cooling by water radiator. Brakes - water cooled transmission and external air brake operated by vacuum cylinders.

SKIPPY THE KANGAROO

BY DANET, DUBRISAY, GENESTRE

AN ANDRÉ BARROT PRODUCTION



HEROES OF THE CLOUDS

SO FAR WE'VE SEEN HOW MEN HAVE LEARNED TO TRAVEL IN BALLOONS AND AIRSHIPS. IT REMAINED FOR THE WRIGHT BROTHERS TO TEACH THE WORLD HOW TO SOAR THE BIRD WAY. THEY BUILT THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL AIRPLANE.



THE FIRST FLIGHT WAS ON DECEMBER 17, 1903.

The Story of Wilbur and Orville Wright — The First Men to Fly!



THE WRIGHT BROTHERS, WERE AMERICAN BILLY BOY, BORN IN 1867. ORVILLE IN 1873. THEY MADE BICYCLES IN DAYTON, OHIO, BEFORE THEY DECIDED TO TAKE OFF FLYING.



1900 AFTER READING ALL THE AVAILABLE BOOKS ON THE SUBJECT, THEY CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT BICYCLES WERE NO GOOD WITHOUT PRACTICE. AND SO THEY BUILT A GLIDER AND SET UP CAMP AT KITTAWAW, NORTH CAROLINA. THEY WERE NATURALLY LAZY TOYS AT FIRST AND ON A LATTER FLIGHTS A NEW FLY FROM THE GROUND. THEY WOULD REALIZE THAT THE OTHER THIS SPENT ENDURING THE DRAINING OF THE BODIES. THEY WOULD MASTER THE AIR.

ALMOST DESIGN A MORE EFFICIENT WING SECTION.



JOHN WINTER, CAME DISTASTED TO DESIGN BUILT A WING TUNNEL, AND MADE HUNDREDS OF TESTS AS THEY WERE NOT SATISFIED WITH THEIR FIRST GLIDER, WHICH PROVED TO BE UNSTABLE IN WINDY WINDS.



THEY WOULD NOW ON THEIR OWN MAKING EXHAUSTED ALL THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXISTING, SOUND COULD TEACH THEM. THEY BUILT ANOTHER GLIDER AND WENT A TRIP IN A GLIDER TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL, FITTING IN WITH A GLIDER AND FLIGHT. AND WHICH ACTED THE SAME WAY AS BICYCLES ON THE GROUND - LAY FLIGHTPLANES. THIS THEY FLUENT WAS THE 'MAYDAY' AND THEY SUCCESSFULLY ANTICIPATED THE CHANGE IN WEATHER TO TEST THEIR SHUTTLES.



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DISCOVERING THE COUNTRYSIDE



LOOK, MR DYKE, WHAT WARE THAT FLASH OF BLUE NEAR THAT WILLOW.

A KINGFISHER, PROBABLY WE'LL HAVE A LOOK ROUND.



YEE, IT WAS JOHN. THERE'S HIS HOME. THAT HOLE IN THE BANK, STAY QUIET HERE, COME! HE WARE CATCHING A FISH - THERE MUST BE SOME YOUNG IN THAT NEST PROBABLY SIX OR SEVEN OF THEM.



THE EGGS ARE LAID AT THE END OF A PASSAGEWAY. TWO OR THREE FIRST LINGS, ITS ALWAYS ATTENDED WITH OLD BONES, BUT OF DISCARTED FISH AND THE LIKE. A DISAPPOINTING NEST FOR ONE OF OUR MOST BEAUTIFUL BIRDS.



A KINGFISHER, GENERALLY USES THE SAME BRANCH OVERHANGING THE WATER. AS A LOOKOUT PLACE FROM WHICH TO PLUNGE INTO THE WATER. AFTER FOOD HE FOLDS THE FISH ROUND HIS MIDDLE AND, WHEN HE GETS SATED, TO HIS PERCH, KILLS IT BY BANGING IT AGAINST THE BRANCH. THEN TURNING IT ROUND AND SWALLOWING THE FISH IN SEVERAL HEAD FIRST.



THE YOUNG KINGFISHERS DO THE SAME. IT IS A PRETTY SIGHT TO SEE A GROWN-UP BABY BIRD, SITTING ON A BRANCH IN THE SUNSHINE, WAITING FOR THE FISH.

Lash Lonergan's Quest

By MOORE RAYMOND

The story so far

Lash Lonergan, Australia's champion cockfighter and stockhorse expert, on his way home to his Uncle's house at Coolibah Creek, learns that his Uncle has been found dead in the bush with a piece of steel in his head, and Dago Menzies claims to be his heir. The Uncle's will is stolen from the bank. By a coincidence called The Handback, Lash follows The Handback but is captured in a fight with horses who wrangle him. In spite of his enemy Lash wins the fight and the horses are lost. Lash is also challenged by Menzies to ride on a stockhorse race tomorrow. The horse is a Chinese named Lash has named and the race will be held at 4:00.

Lash accepts Charlie to ride the debt. The Handback seeks a loan to Lash and Menzies who for offers over \$100 for the missing will. The offer is to be placed in a box in the middle of the road by midnight on Sunday.

Chapter 7

AFTER sundown, darkness came swiftly but still the clays in the creek were aglow with fire and light.

"What's gone on over there?" asked Squab, peering to a gathering group on the bank of the creek. They were forming a ring. Some brought hurricane lamps, burning kerosene with a soft, yellow flame. A few had candle lamps that produced a dim, hazy, flicking light.

"Why don't you make off and have a squab, me boy lad?" muttered Rawhide. "I'm knocked up," groined the boy, settling himself against the bottle tree.

"Cockfighters," someone said. "There's some 'ell in cock-fighting."

Squab was on his feet as a flash. Lash and Rawhide followed at a more leisurely pace. The Irishman said quietly to his friend, "I don't think you'll The Handback write you this letter. Everyone knows you've got about sixty stone bags till you get Coolibah Creek station out of the hands of Dago's horse."

"Maybe he thinks I can get hold of some cash somewhere," replied Lash. "Maybe he thinks I can borrow enough from friends to outfit. Squab, I'll be back in ten days, then look when I get Uncle Peter's estate."

Rawhide spluttered indignantly and squawked. "What does he take you for? Does he think you've got the dingo's tail? Show the crowd and suffer the lumps!"

Look down, cotton. Come and watch the fun."

But instead of being spectators, they immediately became contestants.

"Come on, Lash," urged the self-appointed referee and master of ceremonies, tapping at the cockfighter's sleeve. "You and Rawhide against Jack and Joe Cappy."

But before the Cappy brothers could take up the challenge, another voice cut in.

"We'll take you on!"

Lash and Rawhide turned to see Dago and Greasy Joe, both leaning from their seats. The crowd murmured, knowing the deadly rivalry, shrewing the tension between the two boys.

Lash, shaking Dago, who said "you and your officer on and come into a fellow dog!"

The overseer stepped, and the fat man said, "I'm thinking," dropped in Rawhide. "It might be a good idea to take the hell off this pair. I bet they're giving good prices for stockhorses."

Everybody laughed, everybody but Dago and Greasy Joe.

The latter snarled and made as if to attack the Irishman, but Dago strongly restrained him and said sullenly to Rawhide. "If it's enough you want, you heavy hooligan, then it's enough you'll get."

Rawhide snubbed him on his hands. "Oh, please be to the power of the upper air as our Chinese friends say - for fear we get a heavier chase or 'ell to be happy."

"A hospital bed, probably," snarled Dago.

"And your friend."

"Hey, listen, no rough stuff!" exclaimed the man who had organized the cockfighting. He knew that the game frequently resulted in bumps and bruises, but it looked as if this contest might be more serious.

"Too right, one boy, too right," said Raw-



With a grunt of pain Dago flopped over on one side.

hide as tones that dripped with Irish blarney. "It's gone!" to be a dainty a little cockfight as ever you did see."

Cock-fighting, he turned to the grunting rough-and-tumble men to inspect.

Lash snatched the snorting Irishman and sat on top of his shoulders, with one leg down either side of the huge chest. While Lash tucked each foot into the small of Rawhide's back, the Irishman wrapped his huge arms about his friend's waist.

Meanwhile Dago Menzies snarled Greasy Joe's shoulder. The fat man, despite his grin, was surprisingly powerful and nimble.

"First two falls out of there," and the referee, "Go!"

As the contestants circled slowly in the light of the lamps, they looked like a pair of lumbering goats about to engage. The "moose" - the man underneath - had to keep the balance while his rider tried to grip the other rider. Then, with a push or pull, the man on top tried to upset his rival and send them tumbling to the ground.

"Go-a-oh!" yelled Greasy Joe. He ran straight at Rawhide and crashed straight into him before anyone else involved knew what was happening. At the same time the fat man brought up his heavy knee and thrust it into Rawhide's stomach.

"Light!" shouted the injured Irishman. He staggered and fell, bringing down Lash into the coil.

"Food!" yelled Rawhide, scrambling to his feet. "Dirty food!"

The lead had been so well disguised that only Rawhide was sure it was had happened.

"One fall to Dago and company," called the referee. The others were frolic.

As Lash scrambled on his back, Rawhide glared at Greasy Joe and muttered.

Once more the pants curled each other. This time Rawhide advanced on Greasy Joe. Above him, Lash reached out and grabbed at Dago's overinflated arm.

At the same time, Rawhide lashed against Greasy Joe and, with unexpected speed,

struck his neck and sunk his teeth into the fat man's ear.

"Oh!" roared Greasy Joe, stumbling backward and overbalancing. He crashed on his behind, with Dago on top of him.

"It's his ear on ear!" howled Greasy Joe, reaching for the injury.

"He showed his ear right in his mouth," declared Rawhide to the delighted spectators. "I opened me gob to take a loush of air, and he sticks his finger, finger, ear into it."

Amid laughter from the crowd, the referee declared a fall in favour of Lash and Rawhide.

They murmured and cried for the final and decisive fall. The two "moose" moved closer. The fat man Dago owing a clouded air as apparent that grand Lash's chest.

"Hey!" yelled the referee. "No punches!" Dago knew at well as anybody that his lightning was barred in cockfighting. Lash decided to give him no chance at another foul.

The rougher reached for Dago's throat, and the other man's hands came up in a protective gesture.

Lash swiftly caught Dago's right hand in a thumb-lock and wove it to the left.

Dago tried to resist. His face went white with pain as he clucked at his opponent.

"Better give me," murmured Lash grimly. "No, no," croaked the victim.

Lash applied severe pressure. With a grunt of rage and pain, Dago flopped over on one side. Thrown off his balance, Greasy Joe staggered and fell into the dirt.

While the crowd cheered Lash's victory, Dago thrust his way through the spectators, shaking his hurt hand in his wrist.

Back at the bottle tree Squab gasped, astounded. "Get, Lash, you shag!" on down with a couple of fingers!"

"A jolly thanks, but I burst my teeth," snarled Lash. "I'll take it to you some time."

Rawhide picked up his battered bangs and

strummed on the strings as he sang one of his songs of the moment songs.

"Now Lash and Rawhide had a go. An Dago Menzies and Greasy Joe. Thanks to Rawhide, thanks to Lash, Joe and Dago came a crash!"

Bash, bash, bash! Smash, smash, smash!"

Joe and Dago came a crash!"

Someone touched Lash's arm. He turned to see a big, well-dressed man in city clothes. A tourist, though, as Lash knew quite a bit about a second traveller, or some other kind of business man from town.

"My name's Artell," said the man, holding out his hand. "William Artell, from Carlyham. But you can call me Artell."

Lash gripped and shook hands with the wealthy owner of Carlyham canal station, a vast and rich holding on the other side of the river.

"Can I talk to you privately, Lash?" "OK," said Lash, the rougher, immediately at ease with the newcomer.

"Come over to the hotel."

As they slipped through the crowd, Artell said, "I know your Uncle Peter. Not very well, but well enough to know he was cheating. But you can call me Artell."

Lash received the compliment with a smile. "My wife and I are on our way to Sydney for a holiday," said Artell when they had settled down in the deep summer's chair.

"That's why I'm all dressed up like this. It's our first holiday for seven years, and we'll be away for several months. That's why I want to talk to you."

"No sense," snarled Lash.

"I want you to be overlord of Carlyham while I'm away."

"Oh?" said the startled exclamation. "I've got a good idea when you look after all the routine stuff at the hotel, but I've always acted as overlord of the stockmen myself. I'll like to go on my holiday knowing I've got my own stock in the hands of a man like you. I've been worrying about it ever since I left Carlyham, and as soon as I see you here I know you were the very man."

"I know what you're going to say," interrupted Artell. "You're got to get Coolibah Creek away from Dago Menzies and his mob. You've got to hunt down The Handback and get the will. I know all about that. But you can't do it alone-handed, or even three-handed, to include your two cobbles."

"We'll try," replied Lash firmly.

"You need help. A lot of help - more help than a couple of friends and a couple of mounted police can give. So I'll make a bargain with you. If you'll let me come for three months, when I get back I'll use all my power to see you get your rights. I'll use my money my own way to get Lash Lonergan back to Coolibah Creek."

Lash was silent for a while.

"I'm sorry, Bill," he said at last. "It's no go."

"No, Lash," said the Irish boy.

"I can't wait three months. I can't even wait a month, or even a week. I've got enemies, and I've got to go after 'em full tilt."

Artell snarled his disappointment.

Lash went on. "You've made me a bonus offer. But I only wish I could shake your back and say you, that's all, what's the use of arguing. I've made up my mind about this, and no amount of talk will make me change."

"Oh, well," snarled Artell. "As you're still up the same game tree when I get back, I'll help you all I can."

"If I need you," grinned Lash, "you'll hear my coo-er from Carlyham."

The sound of music drifted down from the ball where people were gathering to sing and dance.

Lash and poodaighs to Artell and strolled up the road to the hall. Already the dance was in progress, and he heard the little wooden building packed with people.

Spotting Squab, Lash beckoned him over.



"Up the road!" pointed the man breathlessly.

hush went up to the platform where Rawhide was sitting.

"Listen, cobbler," he said to his mate, "I oughtn't to do on the back of the creek. I'll go out now and see the horses are settling down for the night."

He was interrupted by an uproar outside the hall. To the sound of confused shouting, followed by several rifle shots, the crowd in the hall made for the door.

"The Hunchback!" came the cry "The Hunchback!"

"I saw his ugly mug!"

Lash caught the last speaker by the shoulder. "Which way did he go?"

"Up the road!" pointed the man heartily, pointing into the darkness. "He just came out!" said a girl with a grin on her face. "Somebody took a couple of potshots at him, but I reckon he's gone."

"Was anybody else with him?"

"Not a one."

Lash started to run, but a restraining hand caught his arm and held him back.

"Don't waste your time and strength," said Sergeant Cleaver, the Gonesville mounted policeman. Behind him stood Sergeant Sealed.

"A nice couple of coppers you are!" snapped Lash. A moment later he regretted the unqualified remark.

He shrugged and smiled. "I'm sorry, mister. Of course you're right. That bush-ranger is somewhere out there—in the dark."

"We were down at the bank waiting for him," and Sergeant Cleaver, "in case he keeps his promise to turn up."

"Not a sign of him," said Sergeant Sealed.

"And then we heard shouts and we saw him galloping up the road."

"Did you do the shooting?" asked Lash.

"Yes, but we couldn't hit him."

"What?" exclaimed the rougher. "Do you mean to tell me a couple of crack shots like you couldn't hit The Hunchback?"

Sergeant Cleaver made a gesture of despair.

"We couldn't fire at the man because there were so many people about," he explained regretfully. "We lived over his head. We thought it might stop him, but it didn't."

Then why did he come?"

As if in reply to his question, the answer came from the corner of Curlyhorn cattle station as he poked his way through the crowd to the two policemen.

"My wife's guess!" screamed Atoll.

"They've gone!" The Hunchback's gut then!

All the horses jockeyed I thought her! A couple of thousands pounds' worth! Look at that!"

He held out a piece of paper.

Somebody held up a horse's long Lash looked over and read the note.

"Better late than never," said the crude lettering. "Yours truly, The Hunchback."

Lash took some notes the bushranger sent to me and Diego," said Lash to the policeman.

"What say you go and ask Diego what he's going to do about his invitation?"

"You don't think he'll tell me, do you?"

"Maybe not," agreed Lash. "But I've got an idea for a trap for The Hunchback. You remember his note—he wants a bid for the well to be put in a tin and changed in the road through Opalescence by Sunday morn'g."

"That's right."

"I'll write a bid and put it in a tin, and I'll put it just where The Hunchback expects to find it. Then you and I, together with a few mounted coppers, will wait in ambush. But before I do that I'd like to get some idea of what Diego Menter is doing."

"All right," sighed the policeman. He went to look for Menter.

They were discussing future plans when the sergeant returned.

"Diego's gone," he said. "Greasy Joe says he's gone hunting The Hunchback."

A smile spread over Lash's broad face—a knowing smile that made the others stare.

"Sergeant," he chuckled, "I've changed my mind again about Diego and The Hunchback. See you in the morning—of all you."

"Die!" — began Sealed.

But Lash had disappeared into the darkness. Fifteen minutes later he rode Monarch at a steady canter along the road to Coolibah Creek.

To be continued

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